



A weekly question/answer column

Is My Weight Management Program Worth Its Weight?

*Nedra Christensen * answers:*

About \$33 billion is spent on weight reduction products and services annually. If you are part of that spending group, evaluate your weight management contract carefully. It should be taken as seriously as a loan or car repair and ought to include basic, important information such as:

- A non-misleading statement of the approach and goals of the program. For example, "Our program emphasizes change in lifestyle with group instruction on diet and physical activity."
- A brief description of the credentials of the staff with more detailed information available upon request.
- A statement of the client population and experience over a period of nine months or more. For example, "To date we have seen 823 clients for at least three visits each. There has been an average weight loss of 12 pounds in the 26 clients who have been with us a year."
- A list of recommendations that include urging you to see your physician at least one month before beginning the program.
- A full disclosure of costs and a listing of programs and facilities that are included.

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